CHAPTER XXI

THE PHILIPPINES AT PLAY

SPORTS *

THE Filipino is an enthusiastic-sportsman. Be it at the nipa-thatched cockpit, at the prizefight stadium, or at the magnificent Rizal Memorial Field, he is vociferously present. Of the few primitive games which still persist, *stya,* a form of kick-ball, is one which was played long before the Philippines was influenced by foreign customs, But most of the sports of today are importations from the United States.

The development of athletics has been a cardinal part of the educational program for the schools. Filipino youth responded nobly to instruction. Baseball, later developed into indoor baseball played outdoors, soccer football, basketball, volley-ball, tennis, and track events are popular. Cold weather games, like American football, are not played, being unsuited to the Philippine climate.

The schools hold regional athletic contests annually. The Bicol Meet of Southern Luzon, which is converted into a great social event, is the best known. Then at the carnival in Manila, the athletes of the schools contest in interscholastic games. The open meet at the carnival, featuring representatives of the common schools, the universities, and the Army, brings together the best athletes of the Islands.

In certain branches of athletics the Filipinos have tended to be more proficient than in others. Take boxing. Filipinos are the gamest of game fighters. Their shifting,

slashing attack makes them prime favorites with the crowd. A number

[1] Section read by Dr. Regino Ylanan, National Physical Director.